



forum

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The History of Hair Transplantation

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Introduction

I have been asked to write a "history" of hair restoration surgery. It is inevitable when one is given such a task that either someone will be "forgotten," because his role in expanding this field was brief, or some will feel they should have been included but weren't or that the space devoted to one or another of these men will be deemed inappropriately too short or too long. Numerous physicians have played substantial roles in expanding the field of hair transplantation, but space limitations prevent me from describing their backgrounds and contributions as fully as I would like. I ask for their understanding. Prominent among them are Robert Auerbach, Jay Barnett, Robert Berger, Nick Brandy, Jim Burks, George Farber, Robert Fosnaugh, Leonard Lewis, Mario Marzola, Hill Pearlstein, Sorrel Resnick, Henry Roenigk, Paul Straub, Carlos Uebel, and John Yarborough. Like most English-speaking people, I have also been "handicapped" by my native tongue, reading only scientific articles published in English. I hope that nobody worthy is left out because they did not publish in English. "History" must also "end" somewhere, so I have arbitrarily not included those who entered the field after 1975—with one exception. Finally, I will not deal with practitioners of flap surgery or tissue expansion. "Flap" and tissue expansion experts such as Jose Juri, Louis Argenta,

Reed Dingman, Bernard Alpert, Ernest Manders, Sheldon Kabaker, Toby Mayer, Richard Fleming, and Richard Anderson have played important roles in hair restoration surgery but only a small percentage of patients are appropriate candidates for flaps and/or tissue expansion, and our space here is limited.

History

The history of hair restoration surgery begins in Wurzburg, Germany, with a doctoral thesis written in 1822 by J. Dieffenbach. His teacher, Carl Unger, suggested he investigate the concept of autotransplantation of hair, feather and skin in animals and fowl—which Dieffenbach proved possible using goose quills as trephines. (The author has struggled—unfortunately in vain—to confirm a relationship to Carl Unger, who lived within a few hundred miles of my father's family home city). For over a century after that, examples of hair transplantation were sporadically published, primarily in the medical literature of Germany, England, France, and Japan. In most cases the reports describe the successful transposition of relatively large grafts or pedicle flaps. Notable exceptions were a German paper on eyelash transplantation of single hairs in the early 1900s and Okuda's 1939 paper in the *Japanese Journal of Dermatology* on punch grafting of hair for alopecia of the scalp,

eyebrow, moustache, and pubic areas.

Despite the foregoing, however, the idea of hair restoration surgery for male pattern baldness (MPB) clearly belongs to one of Dermatology's most distinguished and accomplished members—Dr. Norman Orentreich. If at one time "all roads led to Rome," no discussion of the origins of hair transplantation as a treatment for MPB, or any of the men who first practiced this technique, can begin without homage to this extraordi-

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